CLACKSHUGH,

A

POEM.

IN

MILTONIC VERSE.

By — Daniel (an Excise man)

Nec tantum Phœbo placet Parniſſia rupes.

VIRGIL.

LONDON:

Printed for D. HENRY and R. CAVE, at
St John's Gate. M,DCC,LV.

17461.49
1888-8

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POEM.

ENOUGH of *Pindus* and that far-fam'd hill,
The fabled haunt of *Cynthius* and the Nine,
Enough, *Olympus*, of thy cloud-capp'd top
The *Grecian* bards have ſung. Shall ev'ry hill

Of

Of little *Greece* in lays immortal live
Still proudly rear their heads in verſe, and boaſt
The ſylvan honours of their ſteepy ſides?
Though now, alas! forlorn and deſolate:
And ſhall my native hills remain unſung?
What, were the powers of heav'n-deſcended verſe
To *Greece* alone diſpens'd? Her hills alone
Fit ſubjects for the ſong---Will no kind muſe
With fire cœleſtial touch a northern breaſt,
And all her genial influence lend to praiſe
The nobler hills of *Britain*'s happy iſle.

Britain! the heireſs of proud *Greece*'s honours,
Of liberty and happineſs the ſeat,
The nurſe of arts, the patroneſs of ſcience,
Miſtreſs of commerce and the azure main.

O had

O had I half the force, the gen'rous warmth,
The heaven-born ſpirit that inſpir'd the breaſt
Of thee, ſublime *Maeonides*, or thine,
Majeſtic *Maro*, or bold *Pindar*, thine,
Then ſhould *Britannia* to the ſkies be born,
In equal numbers then her hills ſhould riſe,
Bold as their ſteep, and lofty as their tops.
Thy praiſe, O CLACKSHUGH! let me firſt attempt,
Upon whoſe airy heights ſo oft I've breath'd
The wholeſome vernal breeze, ſo oft been cool'd
In ſummer's ſultry heats. What tho' the name
Be harſh, ungrateful to the muſe's ear,
Yet ſhall the muſe its proſpects deign to paint,
And with *Clackſhuvian* beauties ſwell the ſong.

When from the ſouth the mountain's top you gain,

The labouring breaſt no ſteep aſcent fatigues,
Thro' well-ſtock'd paſtures and enamell'd meads,
And ſpacious fields with waving harveſts cround,
The well-pleas'd traveller purſues his way.
Now on the craggy top he ſtands and ſees
Where far beneath the *Were* his waters rolls,
When by the influx of the neighb'ring main,
His courſe is check'd and backward turn'd his ſtream,
The mountain's foot his ſpreading current laves.
Here ſable fleets of broad flat keels appear,
And in a long ſucceſſive train deſcend,
Full-fraught with coal, the ſtaple of the north,
Their duſky ſails diſplay'd to catch the breeze,
And urge the cumbrous bulk along the ſtream.
But lo! by voice or trampling feet alarm'd,

Sudden

Sudden from underneath the mountain's brow,
The clamorous crows in countleſs thouſands ruſh,
With wings inceſſant-waving win their way,
Reclaiming down the airy ſteep, and ſeek
An humbler refuge in the leafy trees,
The ſylvan border of the winding *Were*.

Down on the ſide a verdant ſlope is ſtretch'd,
Checquer'd with ſhrubs, where joyous cattle graze,
The noble horſe, and nectar-yielding cow,
And fleecy ſheep, *Britannia*'s wealth and pride,
The yellow win-blooms fragrant breathe around
No deſpicable odours, and perfume
The ambient air. If to the pole you look,
The ſide of heav'n's high canopy, from whence
His icy ſtores, whilſt hoary winter reigns,

Rough *Boreas* pours. As far as eye can reach
A plain immenſe extends, with paſtures rich
And flower-embroider'd meads, and waving crops
Of golden plenty ſpread; and where the arch
Of bending heaven ſtoops to meet the globe
Tall *Chevet* rears his head and bounds the view,
And cloud-like ſkirts the diſtant horizon.

Shelter'd from northern blaſts by friendly heights,
There *Hilton* ſtands --- a noble pile --- embower'd
On either hand. The broad majeſtic front
Conſpicuous from afar: With velvet lawns
And art-form'd ſlopes, canals and viſtas grac'd,
Hilton! whoſe owner boaſts his high deſcent
From ſome fierce *Norman* chief, who fought beneath
The Conqu'ror's banners.

Hilton owns of Saxon origin

See where the glorious ruler of the day
Seeems to emerge from the *Cærulean* wave,
Again aſcends the well-known way, and paints
With glowing tints the chambers of the eaſt.
Upon the poliſh'd ſurface of the deep
The ſtately ſhips ſeem fix'd; their lofty vanes
Forget to play, and all their flaccid ſails
Unconſcious of the breeze: their ſhadow'd forms
The fluid glaſs reflects. There on the ſhore,
Where to the ocean *Were* his tribute pays,
A town appears, the ſeat of gloomy Monks,
In former times of bigotry and ignorance.
Not ſo remote are *Southwick*'s roofs, from whence
A gentle ſlope well-till'd declines to meet
The river's verge. One pile o'erlooks the reſt

By ſpiry firs adorn'd. Its miſtreſs fam'd
For poliſh'd manners and commercial toils.

Cloſe by the river's ſide, o'er-topp'd by hills,
A ſtructure[X] ſee, beneath whoſe azure roofs
Dwells blooming *Delia*[Y], faireſt of the fair;
Delia, whoſe lovely fleeting image floats
Before my eyes ev'n now, and on my heart
Imprinted lives.

Whether along the bow'ry walk ſhe moves,
Or through the garden's mazes freely ſtrays,
Or crops the painted flow'r, or likes to pluck
The glowing cherry or the downy peach,
(Leſs ſoft, leſs glowing than her ruby lips)
Or mimic flowers plants in fields of lawn,
Or o'er the meads expatiates to inhale

The

X Pallion Hall
Y Miſs Gondolical

The fragrant evening air, and taſtes the joys
Which contemplation yields to innocence.
Oh! howſoe'er employ'd, ſtill let her be
Acceſſible to love. Ye powers who hear
The lovers vows, and with ſoft tumults move
Their anxious breaſts, make but this charmer mine,
And then, ye great, your boaſted *Gunnings* take,
By me unenvied, and leſs happy far.
------ Now let us turn our eyes
Up to the ſources of the *Were*, and where
Declining Sol with milder fervors ſhines;
See there a wide extended hollow vale,
Its face with trees, and fruits, and verdure ſpread;
With ebon coal its entrails deep replete;
Coal, which ſupplies the ſun's defects, and warms

Britannia's ſons when cold her climes invades;
There where the curling ſmokey columns riſe,
The potent engines ſtand, which creaking draw
Unwelcome water from the delug'd pits,
By art mechanic and alternate force
Of ponderous air and ſtrong repelling ſteam.
Near theſe the pits --- dark --- deep --- and horrible;
Where at the midnight hour alert deſcend
The duſky miners to their dreary toil; ------
Bending along the gloomy paths they creep,
With intricate and various turns perplex'd,
Drift croſſing drift, which form a wond'rous maze
Not yielding to the *Cretan* labyrinth,
Nor *Woodſtock* thine, where royal *Henry* hid
His lovely treaſure, hapleſs *Roſamond*.

Without a clue, and with a glimmering light
Juſt making darkneſs viſible, they find
Each his allotted poſt; then on their kneeſ
With well-ply'd pick-ax hew their daily taſk.
Returning then the center of the maze,
The bottom of the dark profound they ſeek;
By flexile cords and rolling wood updrawn
They riſe to day, and from the darkſome gulf
Jocund emerge and hail the noon-day ſun;
Then to refreſhment, merriment, and ſleep,
Devote the hours 'till ſolemn midnight calls
Renew their toil.
Blind to the future ſometimes they deſcend,
Doom'd never more to ſee the light; for oft
The hoſtile powers of nitre furious wage

With ſulph'rous fumes dire war: nor does the rage
Of conflict ceaſe 'till forceful flame burſts out
And ſweeps the caverns of the hollow mine,
And with exploſion horrid from the pit
In wild diſorder hurries to the clouds
The ſhatter'd wrecks of men, machines, and beaſts.

Scarce the eruptions from the flaming tops
Of *Aetna* and *Veſuvius* more affright,
When clouds of ſmoke in pitchy volumes riſe,
And rocks red-hot are ſhot againſt the ſkies;
Downward its tide the liquid ſulphur rolls,
Wide o'er the plains the burning torrent ſpreads,
Men, beaſts, and trees, and towns before it ſweeps,
And in one common ruin all involves.

The life-ſuſtaining ſpirit of the air,

By long ſtagnation in the deep receſs
Of the dark caverns, ſometimes too is loſt;
Amazing change! ſalubrious air becomes
An inert, noxious, ſuffocating maſs;
And then the miners faintly glimmering lights
And vital flames extinguiſh all at once:
Nor can their bodies from the horrid pit
Be drawn, and to a ſhallow grave conſign'd,
'Till active fire elicits the foul maſs,
And uncorrupted element ſucceeds.
Hard tho' the toil, and dangerous tho' the taſk,
Yet *Britain*'s miners boaſt an happier lot
Than than of proud *Potoſi*'s wretched ſlaves.
To pay the collier for his daily toil
The tawny *Indian* labours in the mine

In ſplendid miſery, nor joys to ſee
The dazzling luſtre of the ſhining ore:
Enriches others, deſtitute himſelf.
The uſeful coal, wiſe commerce, ſoon tranſmutes
To the rich products of *Peruvian* mines,
And to the pits the haughty *Andes* bow.

Such are the ſcenes which open to the mind
Pleas'd with the view from *Britain*'s humbleſt hills
In the cold regions of th' inclement north.
Let others tell what glorious ſcenes ariſe,
When from the heights of loftier hills are ſeen
The nobler beauties of the ſouthern plains.

F I N I S.